

All the great composers, who have passed in review before us, since the origin of the Art, shared in their own lifetime the honors they deserved; all enjoyed their fame, as well those, whose claims posterity has confirmed, as the much greater member whose talents had been overprized by their contemporaries. PALESTRINA saw the eternal city bow before him, and what was still more flattering, his very rivals, if any such he could have had. The inscription: *Musica Princeps* adorns his tomb, which was opened for him beneath the marble slabs of St. Peter's, at the foot of the altar. BIRD, court organist and composer to Queen Elizabeth, received in his own country all, to which he could lay claim. CARISSIMI and SCARLATTI were honored as the first teachers of their epoch, which joyfully derived profit from their instructions, and paid its teachers with recognition and enthusiasm, without forgetting the solid gold. LEO, too, the director of the conservatory at Naples saw himself recognized as the first musician on that classic soil of music. BACH passed always for an oracle in the circle of the initiated, whereof he strove to be the focus. KANDEL for forty years long ruled old England; and France, also adopting a stranger as the national composer, was not less lavish of its honors and rewards towards GLUCK, who left a fortune of three hundred thousand florins as the material product of his laurels. These, if my memory does not deceive me, are about all

the crowned heads in music until HAYDN, and HAYDN, like the others, met with recognition in his lifetime.

After these comes a musician, the greatest of them all, since he includes all in himself, the universal heir of the centuries. This one is neglected by his fatherland and left to himself; Europe scarcely knows him. BURNEY, in his history, which appeared in 1789, does not dwell upon MOZART, the son; he merely cites him among the German musicians, whose names he has collected. One solitary city lavishes its applause on *Don Giovanni*; one solitary man recognizes the all-overtopping place, which the subject of this work assumes among the living and the dead. All the compensation, which the century believes itself to owe him, consists in a situation for life as supernumerary, with the right of burial in the common grave! Who can explain to us so singular a fate? Biographical facts can tell us nothing; musical scores alone make answer; but the answer will appear to us less clear, the more we are in the condition to understand it; and for its understanding we require above all a correct estimate of what is commonly called learned and light music. This will form the subject of our reflections, of which we have above spoken and which are now to follow.

To arrive at satisfactory results in such matters, we must examine the fugued and the melodic style from a double point of view, both in themselves intrinsically and in their relative impression on their hearers, both on the objective and the subjective side. It is not my plan to decide between Peter and Paul, whose individual tastes, systematically adduced, would prove nothing; my purpose is, to show why a thing, which pleases and must please Paul, displeases and must displease Peter.

It is a fact proved by history and proved by daily experience, that the contrapuntal forms sound naturally hostile to the ear; that they invariably repel the person, who does not understand their mystery and who is not accustomed to them; and that, so long as they prevailed to the exclusion of melody, there were no amateurs or lovers of music in the present sense of the word. The men, who loved music without having learned it, held to the music of the people. On the other hand it is also proved, that, when the melodic style, and with it dilettantism, appeared, the most learned theorists and greatest composers, down to HANDEL and BACH inclusive, continued to regard the fugue as the most beautiful and noble product of the musical art.

Under these circumstances it will be seen, that the contest between the learned musicians and the man who judges simply by the ear, must have had its beginning with Count Vernio and the Madrigalists; which was in fact the case. All that was ever said about it may be summed up somewhat as follows: "To whom does it belong to judge of music? to us, who have made it the study of our lives, who number some of your own men under our standard, and who, some of us, have laid down the rules? or to you, who scarcely know the first elements of music, if indeed you know any thing at all about it?" This was and is and ever will be the quintessence of the argument of the learned. This seems reasonable enough; but hear what the unlearned ones reply: "Yes, if the question was about the Integral Calculus or the Transcendental Metaphysics,

you would say rightly; but it is the question of an art, and what an art? of Music, which God has evidently not made for you alone. Poetry, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture have likewise their artistic mysteries. But does this prevent even the most ordinary minds from understanding and sincerely admiring a RACINE, a SCHILLER, a BYRON, a RAFAELLE, or a MICHAEL ANGELO? It is the very peculiarity of the truly Beautiful, that, like the sun, the light of all eyes, it shines for every understanding. Everybody feels this. Is it so with your fuguists? You tell us, that we do not understand them; good, but it is just this that breaks their wand. We possess like you the feeling of the harmonic law, which is a law of nature and entirely in accordance with the human organization; this feeling has been developed in us through the prolonged enjoyment, which melodious and expressive, in a word true music yields; but inasmuch as none of us, in spite of repeated listening, have derived any enjoyment from the Fugue, it follows, that the style stands in plain and perpetual contradiction with this very law of nature, and consequently is a mere relic of musical barbarism, a prejudice that has grown old with musicians; and that it has no value but its difficulty for the man who occupies himself with it. *The fugue is the ungrateful masterpiece of a good harmonist.* This a saying of one of your own men, ROUSSEAU, the theorist and composer, one who had your discernment, without your prejudices. *Basta.*"

These too have reason, you will say perhaps, No, not entirely so, respected reader. If thou thyself had pronounced such a judgement, I should by all means tell thee, that thou proceedest from false premises. Music is an Art. But we must not forget to add, a Science too, which would have altogether altered thy conclusions. The objection, that the other arts have likewise their technical or learned side, proves only that, in order to enjoy them, one must possess the requisite knowledge. Thus the proof is against thee. To understand the Poet, one must at least know the language, in which he has written; for no translation will ever teach thee to know him. To understand a Painter, one must have at least acquired a notion of the laws of perspective and of optics; but with this preparatory knowledge thou art still very far from being able to distinguish all the types of ideal and visible beauty, wanting deeper knowledge. The distinction between Music and the other arts lies here: the knowledge it requires, before it can be comprehended in the totality of its types, is far less general, because it is beyond all proportion much more difficult to master. If thou sayest every one is qualified to judge of SCHILLER, RAFAELLE and MICHAEL ANGELO, thou usest a figure of rhetoric, called Synecdoche, whereby the whole is taken for the part, or *vice versa*. In logic rhetoric is superfluous. Thy every one is the millionth part of the human race; it consists of the rich, the cultivated and the learned, who own libraries, buy pictures and support elegant dwellings,—of the class, to which thou thyself belongest. But ask the people; read Schiller's "Resignation" to a respectable sausage-manufacturer, and he will exclaim: What the devil is that! Give an Apollo to a market-woman to admire, and she will tell you, that the sculptor is a block-head, the God is blind. Farther and still more keenly insulting observations perhaps they will

utter or keep to themselves about the lover of Daphne. Show a painting of the most learned conception to some Chinese mandarin, a patron of the fine arts; he will burst out into laughter, since the faces appear to him clean on one side and besmeared with black and blue upon the other; the background of the picture will form a sort of *etagère*, and the figures, which he will take for dwarfs and giants, will seem to him to be dancing round on top of one another. He will tell them with constrained complaints: Good sir, you are making merry with the people.

What if thy case with regard to the Fugue,—thou, who art a man of the world, and hast acquired sufficient knowledge, and kept the run of all the literature, the arts, the paintings, the dramatic and the concert music,—what if it were the same with the Chinese man's as regards that picture?

Unpractised eyes see in the picture something very different from what they were intended to see. It is easy to prove, that the perceptions of the organ of hearing are subject to the same material errors; only the mind can correct them in the case of seeing more quickly and more easily than in the case of hearing.

Two causes, which by close connection and by mutual reaction blend their effects, make the Fugue a veritable monster in the ear of a not very musical hearer. The first is the manifold or composite unity of the Fugue; the second is the kind of chords which this double-faced unity introduces. The one suppresses the sense of the music for the hearer, of whom we speak; the other does more; it makes it hateful to him; and both contribute to produce materially different impressions from what it was intended he should hear.

In the melodic style, where the unity of the composition lies in the unity of the principal melody, the song, the chords and the figures of the accompaniment make but one. You separate them as little in the impressions you receive, as you do a beautiful woman from the various articles of her toilet, in the total impression which she makes when she presents herself. It costs small pains to comprehend this simple unity. You yield yourself up to the flow of the simple melody; you listen altogether passively, and the enjoyment seeks you of itself, without your having to run after it.

The Fugue imposes altogether different conditions on the hearer. Here is no melodic and rhythmic unity, to lead one on infallibly. Two, three, four themes are perceptible, each with a different aspect and a different movement; each claims an equal portion of the ear's attention; and, to continue our former simile, it is no longer a head or a single portrait, which you have before you; but artfully arranged groups, whose separate figures emulate each other in character, expression and importance. This occasions no difficulties in a picture, I know very well; for one has time to study an immoveable canvass. But unfortunately the figures of a composer use their legs; they run away from you, as swift as thought, changing their looks and attitudes each moment. One must beware; whichever theme he may select out of this moving labyrinth for a leading thread, it will prove no better than an *ignus fatuus* to him, if he lose sight of the other, the companion themes. Let him seek to overtake them in their flight; let him impress upon his brain their individual features as well as their collective



physiognomy; let him follow them through the labyrinthine windings and seeming divergence of their courses to the æsthetic goal, whereto they are all striving, and he will find the meaning of the musical picture, the composite unity, the *idem et varium*, which forms its device.

But to be able in this way to understand several persons speaking at one, the ear must possess something of Caesar's faculty, who dictated seven letters at once to as many scribes. One must possess a power of musical discrimination, which the happiest talents do not lend, unless they have been cultivated by the actual practice and the theoretic study of the art. Only a good musician can so divide his attention, and at his pleasure listen to the details, without ever losing the whole. This I call the learned or active listening, which is conscious of its free will and of the ability to use it. Moreover there are works, which even the most dexterous with a single or with several hearings cannot wholly comprehend. But what does the musician do in that case? He brings the eyes to the aid of the ears; he reads the work in the score; he executes it in his head, as often as he pleases, whereby the work becomes as clear to him as any minuet or song. If then with all the necessary means he does not understand it, the fault lies not in him. But what is there left of a Fugue to a dilettante, who is not qualified to hear it as it must be heard, still less to read a score written in the contrapuntal style? Vague and utterly false impressions, obscurities, in short absolutely nothing. The only work in this style, into whose meaning he has power to penetrate, if go farther, is perhaps the "Chaos" of HAYDN.

[To be continued.]

### Organ Building in New England.

From Moore's Encyclopedia of Music.

The progress of our countrymen in organ building has been every way satisfactory and flattering, and would seem to have quite exceeded the expectation formerly entertained by many of the old professional men. So far as regards the mere mechanical construction of the organ, doubtless it is a trade which may be taught and learned, like that of the carpenter, the cabinet maker, or the machinist. But the mechanical construction of his instrument, whatever may be its difficulties, is but a part of the work of the true organ builder. He must have genius and skill to invent and devise such plans, proportions, and combinations, for his various stops and pipes, and a capacity so to voice and tune them, that the greatest possible musical effect may be produced from his instrument. Hence organ building has been very properly considered a liberal art, in as much as it demands, in the words of an intelligent musical writer, "original genius and cultivated taste, united with knowledge, practice, and experience, and a musical ear delicately sensible to the perfection of tone and tune."

William M. Goodrich is admitted, on all hands, to have been the first American organ builder worthy of the name, although there were several persons in New England who carried on the business before his time. The first organ built in America was built by Edward Bromfield, Jr., in Boston, in 1745. In 1752 Mr. Thomas Johnston built an organ for Christ Church, Boston. The first foreign organ ever put up in Boston is presumed to have been the one erected in King's Chapel in the year 1714. The Messrs. Hook have now in their possession a remnant of one of Johnston's instruments, formerly in the Episcopal church at Salem. On the front, or name board, there is an inscription in German text, executed in ivory, as follows: "Thomas Johnston fecit, Boston, Nov. Anglorum, 1754." It was a small organ, with one bank of keys and six stops.

Johnston died about 1768, and was succeeded by Dr. Josiah Leavitt, in early life a practising physician. Dr. Leavitt was engaged in the business for a number of years. After him came Mr. Henry Pratt, of Winchester, New Hampshire, who died in 1849. Mr. Pratt had built about twenty-three small church organs and some nineteen chamber organs, when Mr. Goodrich made his appearance. This talented artist was born in Templeton, Mass., in 1777; went to Boston about the year 1799, and continued in business there up to the time of his death, in 1833. It was Mr. Goodrich who gave a character to the art of organ building in this country, and constructed such instruments as rendered importation from Europe (to any extent) unnecessary. The writer of a very interesting memoir of Mr. Goodrich, and of the progress of the art in New England, says:

"Persons remarkable for ingenuity or enterprise, who originate useful inventions and improvements, or who introduce and establish new branches of business and of the mechanic arts, may be ranked among our most useful citizens. They contribute, in an eminent degree, to the public prosperity, and to the rapid advance of the nation not only in wealth and power, but in those attributes which command influence and respect among the nations of Europe. To this class of citizens may justly be referred Mr. William M. Goodrich. He was well and extensively known as an ingenious, self-taught mechanic, and particularly as an excellent organ builder. His instruments are to be found in churches in every part of the Union, and even far beyond its limits. Mr. Goodrich was curious and inquisitive, not only in mechanics, but in other branches of knowledge; and he studied and investigated whatever interested him with great perseverance and attention. He had originally a fine musical ear. In early life he improved this faculty, both by study and practice, and he was ever afterwards extremely fond of music. This union of the mechanical and the musical taste and faculty naturally led him, when the opportunity offered, to undertake the construction of organs. It was the united love of these arts which constantly urged him on, made him overcome every difficulty, and raised him to that height of excellence which he finally attained."

Mr. Goodrich built his first church organ in Boston for Bishop Chevereux, of the Catholic Church, in 1805. This instrument he, in 1822, removed, and in its place set up a much larger and better one. "Soon after commencing business," says the writer of the memoir alluded to, "he was appointed to clean, repair, and put in tune, two or three excellent English organs, then in Boston, and afterwards others in other places. From the opportunities which making those repairs afforded him he derived great and important advantages. His previous scales and plans, being mostly contrived by himself, were necessarily imperfect and incomplete. He had now the power of improving them. He carefully inspected the work of the best of these foreign organs, observed the contrivance and arrangement of the several parts, and took the dimensions and proportions of the pipes and other portions of the interior. All, or most of these, he introduced, at various times into his own organs; and, after due trial, adopted such as he deemed the best for his own future use."

"It is highly creditable," continues the writer, "to Mr. Goodrich and his pupils, that during the whole period of his being in business, (from 1805 to 1833,) and notwithstanding the violent prejudice which existed, for a long time, against American manufactures, and in favor of every thing that was English, only three church organs were imported into Boston from abroad. Two of these, by Fruin, of London, are said not to be remarkable for excellence. The third, built by Elliot, of London, for the Old South Church, in 1822, is considered to be a very superior instrument. It cost the society seven thousand one hundred and twenty-eight dollars."

Soon after Mr. William M. Goodrich commenced business in Boston, his brother Ebenezer went into his manufactory to learn the business in Boston, finally set up on his own account, and

built quite a number of instruments, mostly of small size. About the year 1807, Mr. Thomas Appleton, who had served a regular apprenticeship with a cabinet maker, entered into the employment of Mr. W. M. Goodrich, and continued with him several years. Mr. Appleton then formed a connection in business with Mr. Babcock, a piano-forte maker, and two persons by the name of Hayt—under the name of Hayts, Babcock, & Appleton. They took a building in Milk Street, Boston, and commenced manufacturing organs and piano-fortes. In the course of a year, Mr. Goodrich was induced to join the establishment, and attend to the voicing and tuning of the instruments—the most delicate and difficult part of the organ building, and a part for which the greatest amount of mere mechanical skill will always be found insufficient if it be not coupled with original genius and taste.

The Milk Street firm, after undergoing various changes, was finally, in 1820, dissolved. Mr. Appleton took a building in another situation, and continued the business on his own account. The first three organs he built were voiced and tuned by Ebenezer Goodrich. One of these was afterwards revoiced and tuned by Corri, an Englishman, who came over with the Old South Church organ. Corri was employed by Mr. Appleton, in voicing and tuning, for several years, and was probably one of the most talented men he ever had with him. Mr. Appleton has built, since he first went into business, a large number of organs, many of them, undoubtedly, very good instruments. He afterwards, we believe, formed a connection with a young builder by the name of Warren, under the firm of Appleton & Warren. Mr. Warren afterwards commenced business for himself at Montreal, Canada East.

About the year 1831, the art of organ building in America began to receive a new impulse. Messrs. E. & G. G. Hook commenced business in Boston about this time, and they had previously carried on the business in Salem, where they had already built for various persons nineteen organs. The elder Hook was, at the age of sixteen, an apprentice to the celebrated W. M. Goodrich, many of the peculiar qualities of whose mind he seems to possess in an eminent degree—such as great inquisitiveness and ingenuity in mechanics, united with a constant disposition to introduce new features in his method of construction, and to seize upon all foreign improvements deemed to be of any value.

William Nutting, Jr., formerly of Randolph, Vt., in 1853, opened a large organ establishment at Bellows Falls, Vt. He had previously built a number of organs, which have been considered as good as any built in the country.

There were, in 1853, in Boston and its immediate vicinity, four extensive organ factories, viz: Appleton's at Reading, Steven's at East Cambridge, Simmons' (Mr. William B. D. Simmons was for many years in the employ of Mr. Appleton, before commencing manufacturing on his own account) on Causeway Street, and Hook's on Leverett Street. John Mackay was connected with Mr. Appleton in 1810. In 1812, on account of the embargo which existed during the war, a portion of the material, (tin, zinc, and ivory,) used by organ builders, became so scarce that it could not be obtained, except at an almost ruinous expense; consequently this branch of manufactures experienced a temporary decline.

### Wood Sounds.

[From "Walden," by H. D. Thoreau.]

Sometimes, on Sundays, I heard the bells, the Lincoln, Acton, Bedford or Concord bell, when the wind was favorable, a faint, sweet, and, as it were, natural melody, worth importing into the wilderness. At a sufficient distance over the woods this sound acquires a certain vibratory hum, as if the pine needles in the horizon were the strings of a harp which it swept. All sound heard at the greatest possible distance, produces one and the same effect, a vibration of the universal lyre, just as the intervening atmosphere makes a distant ridge of earth interesting to our

eyes by the azure tint it imparts to it. There came to me in this case a melody which the air had strained, and which had conversed with every leaf and needle of the wood, that portion of the sound which the elements had taken up and modulated and echoed from vale to vale. The echo is, to some extent, an original sound, and therein is the magic and charm of it. It is not merely a repetition of what was worth repeating in the bell, but partly the voice of the wood; the same trivial words and notes sung by a wood-nymph.

At evening, the distant lowing of some cow in the horizon beyond the woods sounded sweet and melodious, and at first I would mistake it for the voices of certain minstrels by whom I was sometimes serenaded, who might be straying over hill and dale; but soon I was not unpleasantly disappointed when it was prolonged into the cheap and natural music of the cow. I do not mean to be satirical, but to express my appreciation of those youths' singing, when I state that I perceived clearly that it was akin to the music of the cow, and they were at length one articulation of Nature.

Regularly at half-past seven, in one part of the summer, after the evening train had gone by, the whippoorwills chanted their vespers for half an hour, sitting on a stump by my door, or upon the ridge pole of the house. They would begin to sing almost with as much precision as a clock, within five minutes of a particular time, referred to the setting of the sun, every evening. I had a rare opportunity to become acquainted with their habits. Sometimes I heard four or five at once in different parts of the wood, by accident one a bar behind another, and so near me that I distinguished not only the cluck after each note, but often that singular buzzing sound like a fly in a spider's web, only proportionally louder. Sometimes one would circle round and round me in the woods a few feet distant as if tethered by a string, when probably I was near its eggs. They sang at intervals throughout the night, and were again as musical as ever just before and about dawn.

When other birds are still the screech owls take up the strain, like mourning women their ancient u-lu-lu. Their dismal scream is truly Ben Jonsonian. Wise midnight hags! It is no honest and blunt tu-whit tu-who of the poets, but, without jesting, a most solemn graveyard ditty, the mutual consolations of suicide lovers remembering the pangs and the delights of supernal love in the infernal groves. Yet I love to hear their wailing, their doleful responses, trilled along the woodside; reminding me sometimes of music and singing birds; as if it were the dark and tearful side of music, the regrets and sighs that would fain be sung. They are the spirits, the low spirits and melancholy forebodings, of fallen souls that once in human shape night-walked the earth and did the deeds of darkness, now expiating their sins with their wailing hymns or threnodies in the scenery of their transgressions. They give me a new sense of the variety and capacity of that nature which is our common dwelling. *Oh-o-o-o-o that I never had been bor-r-r-r-n!* sighs one on this side of the pond, and circles with the restlessness of despair to some new perch on the gray oaks. Then—that *I never had been bor-r-r-r-n!* echoes another on the farther side with tremulous sincerity, and—*bor-r-r-r-n!* comes faintly from far in the Lincoln woods.

I was also serenaded by a hooting owl. Near at hand you could fancy it the most melancholy sound in Nature, as if she meant by this to stereotype and make permanent in her choir the dying moans of a human being,—some poor weak relic of mortality who has left hope behind, and howls like an animal, yet with human sobs, on entering the dark valley, made more awful by a certain gurgling melodiousness.—I find myself beginning with the letters *gl* when I try to imitate it,—expressive of a mind which has reached the gelatinous midlewy stage in the mortification of all healthy and courageous thought. It reminded me of ghouls and idiots and insane howlings. But now one answers from far woods in a strain made really melodious by distance,—*Hoo*

*hoo hoo, hooer hoo;* and indeed for the most part it suggested only pleasing associations, whether heard by day or night, summer or winter.

I rejoice that there are owls. Let them do the idiotic and maniacal hooting for men. It is a sound admirably suited to swamps and twilight woods, which no day illustrates, suggesting a vast and undeveloped nature which men have not recognized. They represent the stark twilight and unsatisfied thoughts which all have. All day the sun has shone on the surface of some savage swamp, where the single spruce stands hung with usnea lichens, and small hawks circulate above, and the chickadee lisps amid the evergreens, and the partridge and rabbit skulk beneath; but now a more dismal and fitting day dawns, and a different race of creatures awakes to express the meaning of Nature there.

Late in the evening I heard the distant rumbling of wagons over bridges,—a sound heard farther than almost any other at night,—the baying of dogs, and sometimes again the lowing of some disconsolate cow in a distant barn-yard. In the mean while all the shore rang with the tramp of bullfrogs, the sturdy spirits of ancient wine-bibbers and wassailers, still unrepentant, trying to sing a catch in their Stygian lake,—if the Walden nymphs will pardon the comparison, for though there are almost no weeds, there are frogs there,—who would fain keep up the hilarious rules of their old festal tables, though their voices have waxed hoarse and solemnly grave, mocking at mirth, and the wine has lost its flavor, and become only liquor to distend their paunches, and sweet intoxication never comes to drown the memory of the past, but mere saturation and waterloggedness and distention. The most aldermanic, with his chin upon a heart-leaf, which serves for a napkin for his drooling chaps, under this northern shore quaffs a deep draught of the once scorned water, and passes round the cup with the ejaculation *tr-r-r-oouk! tr-r-r-oouk! tr-r-r-oouk!* and straightway comes over the water from some distant cove the same password repeated, where the next in seniority and girth has gulped down to his mark; and when this observance has made the circuit of the shores, then ejaculates the master of ceremonies, with satisfaction, *tr-r-r-oouk!* and each in his turn repeats the same down to the least distended, leakiest, and flabbiest paunched, that there be no mistake; and then the bowl goes round again and again, until the sun disperses the morning mist, and only the patriarch is not under the pond, but vainly bellowing *troouk* from time to time, and pausing for a reply.

[From the London Athenæum.]

#### Madame Sontag.

Henrietta Sontag was born in Coblenz, on the 13th of May, 1805—the child of an obscure German actor and actress. She was destined for the stage from her cradle: and when she was only six years old she was brought forward "on the boards," at Darmstadt, as Salome, in the "*Don-aureichen*" of Kauer, in which she is said to have excited a sensation as a prodigy. In her ninth year, on the loss of her father, the little girl was placed in the Conservatory of Prague; and because of her remarkable gifts, was admitted as a student three years before the period fixed in the statutes of the Institution. She there was made an excellent musician; and the name of her singing mistress, Madame Czezka, is worthy of record, since in few artists, dead or living can the voice have been more perfectly developed. Her biographers, however, insist that Henrietta profited much from attending the performances of Madame Mainvielle Fodor, when on leaving the Conservatory of Prague, she went to Vienna and commenced her career there by appearing alternately in German and Italian opera. Be this as it may, as early as the year 1821 she had taken her place, by singing, at a moment's warning, in Prague, the part of the Princess of Navarre in Boieldieu's "*Jean de Paris*;" and her reputation must have been as high as it was versatile within a short period of her arrival in the Austrian capital, since, in 1823, she was selected by Weber, in the

full outburst of his popularity, to sustain the principal part in his "*Euryanthe*,"—and in 1824 she was grasped by Beethoven as *solo soprano* for his "*Choral Symphony*" and *Missa Solennis*—both also then produced for the first time; and neither of them "child's play." In the same year, 1824, Mlle. Sontag's engagements at Leipsic and Berlin were the commencement of half-a-dozen years of triumph, enthusiasm, popularity, emolument, such as, in those days, had hardly been won by even the queenly Catalani herself. Mlle. Sontag's innocent loveliness and natural sweetness of manner doubtless aided the charm—but the reality of her voice, the perfection of her method, and her sound musical skill, had the largest share in the popular frenzy—for to frenzy it amounted among the knights, squires, students and artists of Germany north and south. It was owing to her musical reputation rather than to her personal graces that the enchantress was soon tempted to Paris and London by offers at that time fabulous in amount; and this at a moment when Pasta was in full glory and Garcia's eldest daughter, Malibran, was all but ready to appear.

It will say much to every one capable of reflection, that, without commanding any force or originality as an actress, Mlle. Sontag could still establish her position and confirm her German triumphs on the Italian theatres of Paris and London, in spite of rivalry so redoubtable. It seems like a dream of another world to recollect the concerts at Marlborough House, then inhabited by Prince Leopold, in which she sang—the struggles for squeezing-room in the pit of the Opera, when she appeared as Desdemona to Pasta's Otello—and the tales in *Fop's Alley* which declared how the Italian Tragic Muse "showed her sense" of the German warbler's fascinations by grasping at Desdemona's fair hair with a little private vindictiveness as well as professional fury! It seems like a dream,—but such was the excitement that a fashionable publisher, apt at bubble-blowing, absolutely announced as about to appear among the new books of the season, "*Travelling sketches*," by Mlle. Sontag. As to the alliances proposed her by Rumor—without end as without beginning—there was hardly a conceivable grandeur, short of crown and sceptre, for which the new Rosina was not laid out. But the wonder was little more than "a nine day's wonder," since, after one or two seasons of success and adulation, it became understood that Mlle. Sontag had been for some time engaged to a foreign gentleman of noble family and that the two were merely waiting till her fortune was assured. In due time the marriage took place—Mlle. Sontag was presented with a fictitious escutcheon and ancestry by the King of Prussia, in order that she might be eligible for continental high society—the artist disappeared into the diplomatic world; and MM. Scribe and Auber wrote their charming "*Ambassadors*," (with no remote reference, rumor went on to say, to the Lady's story,) in which Henriette, the heroine, was sung by Madame Cinti-Damoreau. But, though replaced in the opera-house of Europe, the Sontag was not forgotten—she was heard of from time to time as singing in the Court circles of Prussia and Russia, or as lending her talent and her rank in aid of some charitable performances—latterly reputed (not unnaturally) to have lost some of her old flexibility and grace—until the amount of her past exquisite powers and accomplishments became questioned by those whose homage and regard know only the "Cynthia of the minute."

Almost twenty years had elapsed, which we were informed that, as one of the consequences of the revolution of 1848, Madame Sontag was compelled by vicissitudes of fortune to return to the opera houses of Europe, and was to begin by replacing Mlle. Lind at Her Majesty's Theatre. The *Athenæum* duly recorded [No. 1133] the result of this perilous experiment; for more perilous it was in every point of view than any reappearance we can recollect. How Madame Sontag proved herself little worse for the caprices or decays of time, and was able to cope with the real and exaggerated reputation of her predecessor—how she rose superior to the charlatry which tried to make up another "sensation" for her, as for "a Countess



in difficulties"—how she adventured with as much courage as skill in a new and very wide repertory, which had not existence when she left the stage—were told in this journal, week by week. No girl—eager to win a reputation for usefulness, obligingness, and versatility—ever studied so many unfamiliar works in so short a time as Madame Sontag. In the "Figlia" of Donizetti (for instance) her archness and brilliancy carried off the palm in the lesson-scene, against the youthful ingenuousness and great vocal execution of Mlle. Lind. In the "Prodigo" of Auber she fairly "sang down" the then "Sontag" of the Opera Comique of Paris, Madame Ugalde. She saved "Le tre Nozze" by the airy vivacity of her dancing song. She carried through the ungracious part of Miranda, in "La Tempesta." Her success, in short, was no case of "allowance," loyalty to a former favorite, and the like,—but a newly gained, honestly maintained, triumph, under circumstances, we repeat, of unexampled peculiarity. How, after such active services in England and France—including festivals, concerts, every thing, in short, that the freshest and most vigorous artist can be called on to accomplish—Madame Sontag passed to Germany and subsequently to America, where she died, after having all but succeeded in her object—a restoration of fortune—may be left to be told more at length by annalists to come.

Considered with reference to her art, Madame Sontag claims the highest place as a consummate vocalist and musician, if not as a woman of genius. Nature had been prodigal of charm to her voice; but art had given it its wonderful executive fluency, and enabled her to keep it so long in abeyance (as it were) unimpaired. Madame Sontag's taste too, though leaning towards the florid and the delicate, was mostly judicious—always so in the great music of the great musicians. In particular, it must be again put on record that her "handling" of Mozart's music was incomparable. We have heard no one sing it so graciously, so temperately, yet with so much variety as she. With all the feats and features of Madame Sontag's re-appearance fresh in our memory, we cannot recall one instance of deficient preparation, incompleteness, or failure. The quiet intrepidity and resolution with which she may be credited, made her agreeable and presentable, as an actress, without having any natural store of dramatic vigor or impulse to draw upon. Her demeanor on the stage was always attractive: her attention to the business of the scene sedulous. She was modest as she was self-possessed; never impassioned, but never affected—rarely dull, sometimes graciously, often quietly cheerful; once or twice (by expectation it seemed) heartily gay.

As a woman, Madame Sontag was courteous in manners rather than lively in conversation or acute in remark. Totally unaware, it seemed, of the distinction which her artist's name reflected on those around her,—gently acquiescent in all the *ennui* and ceremony which belong to the life of a great lady,—curious in the "pumps and vanities" of the toilette—"a Beauty," in short, in many of her ways—it was remarkable to observe how strong a hold, after all, her real life (which was the life of a singer) had retained upon her,—how she had kept the facts and interests of her old profession warm and quick *in petto*, ready to re-appear, for her own guidance and enjoyment. When we knew Madame Sontag, her most genuine talk was that of the green-room; and devoted as was her desire to build up the fortunes of her family, we still believe that the steadiness with which this was carried through had a strong sinew, not merely in the duty of the wife, but in the conscious pride and pleasure of the great vocalist. She felt that she could keep and resume her place by the side of women of greater genius; and this in two distinct generations.

#### Extracts from Hurlbut's 'Gan-Eden.'

##### THE DANCE OF CUBA.

The Creole dandy, (compassionate him, oh thou his serious Northern brother!) drifts slowly down his sluggish canal of life without a dream of struggle or endeavor. Sometimes he riots in a

melodious operatic rage; but the wave rises highest in his heart, whenever the Dulcinea of the moment makes his encircling arm her stay in the slow, graceful whirl of that delicious *contra-danza*, which is the rhythmic utterance of his warm languid life. Oh! how wooingly, how trancingly floats now through my memory, the soft entrancing music of that luxurious dance! a mystery as strange and sweet as is all that life so alien from our own, which flavors the tropic world! It is the dance of Cuba, and the children of Cuba alone have its secret. You can always detect the foreigner through all the grace and all the precision of his step. The dance is the earliest and most national of national lyrics. The Tarentella, maddening on the moonlit sands of Sorrento; the Cachucha, inspiring every limb of the ardent daughter of Andalusia; the *contra-danza*, pouring the plaintive passion of its wailing cadences through every nerve and vein of the pale, dark-eyed Creoles, till the very music seems to come from them,

"And all the notes appear to be  
The echoes of their feet:"

these may all be felt, but cannot be fathomed by the stranger. The measure of the *contradanza* always brought before me visions of "the mild-eyed melancholy" Indians, of that soft, unwarlike people to whom life was one sweet song and breathing dance in this fair island, before the greedy Spaniard came with traffic and with toil, to sweep them from the earth. The music of the Indian names and words which the conquerors have preserved, is kindred in character with the measure of the *contradanza*. Guanabacoa, Camarioca, Baracoa, Guanajay, guanava, guayava; the soft delaying flow of such words as these revives for us the whole spirit of the vanished people, to whom to die was easier than to work. Long may it be before the camp dances of the big-booted Slavonians, or the mincing absurdities of the diplomatic quadrille, shall banish from the saloons of Cuba their own most graceful and expressive measure!

The present customs of the land in regard to the intercourse of the young people, are a great shield to the *contradanza*. The youths and maidens could not spare it. Every Cuban young lady is carefully secluded from the approaches of "young Cuba," by a system of modified duennadom. On the Paseo, and particularly on the Plaza de Armas, the shepherd may indeed converse with his nymph, but always under the eye of her dragon, and the third visit of Lycidas to Chloris, subjects him to a tête-à-tête with Chloris *mère*, and to a specific investigation into his intentions. The mazes of the *contradanza* alone are free, and in that brief season of sunshine, flirtations spring up like flowers in the fleeting Scandinavian summer.

##### OPERA AT HAVANA—TACON THEATRE.

Everybody knows that the Tacon Theatre is the largest in America, and one of the largest in the world. Madame Calderon familiarized us with the splendors of its appearance, to which, indeed, that lively lady did no more than justice. The well-dressed pit relieves, with masses of black and white, the variegated glitter of the boxes. Inclosed only by a slender gilded railing these boxes display very finely the flashing eyes and flashing diamonds, the dark tresses, and glowing dresses of fair Havana. Each box contains a family party with a seat or two to spare, and throughout the evening each family receives visitors, who wander around the great cool passageways, peep through the latticed partitions and spend their evenings as that ancient bachelor his mornings, "in making dodging calls, and wriggling round among the ladies." When the spectacle within grows tedious, you wander into those great corridors, refreshed with breezes that blow through enormous windows, and thronged with animated groups. Impertinent looking soldiers in their white uniforms stalk majestically about, shoving the Creoles, and making way for foreigners, while at the open door of every box "obsequious darkness waits" in gold-laced livery. It is more sad than amusing, however, to witness one feature of this brilliant spectacle. The Creole children, in

too many cases, shock the eye by their costume, and their manners, more than they win it by their beauty of person and of feature. One rarely sees a positively ugly child in Havana. But quite as rarely does one see a childly child. It is one of the sad consequences of the system of social life in the Island, that children associated with their mothers in the ball-room, the dining-room, and the theatre, from the tenderest years, that they may escape the contamination of slave influence, are forced into a precocity, compared with which the sophistication of Punch's immortal juveniles resembles the innocence of the babes in the wood. And there they are at the Opera House, mirroring "the greater audience in an audience less," the absurd little boys in tight body-coats and high hats, swinging jeweled canes, the girls laced, fringed, flounced like their mammas, flirting, too, like them, their costly fans, with the imitated air, and too often with the genuine expression of the maturest coquetry. Over them the moralist drops a tear. The hopeful traveller recalls with grateful heart the memory of other little ones, more in number, too, than the Piper left in Hamelin, in whose bright eyes childhood laughed, whose red lips budded only in the sinless smile of happy infancy, and thereupon, beholds the Cuban future shine more cheerily upon his thought.

This winter Havana has had no Italian troupe. I should have been glad to see one of those deifications which have so easily won for Havana the reputation of being a very musical city. A Stefanoni, crowned with silver, and pelted with jewels, a Marini, ranting in regal state, would have been a sight worth seeing. The applauses of such an audience as Havana could furnish, must come down like a tropical shower, indiscriminating, fierce, and appalling. For while the musical cultivation of Havana is evidently very imperfect, the Creole nature and the Creole education must make the Habaneros very susceptible of the titillating influence of merely sensuous music. One would not look here for such an intelligent and judicial *furore* as those that have so often shaken the walls of the Fenice and La Scala, of the Pergola and San Carlo, but a gushing, irrational, dispendious enthusiasm is always entertaining to the calmer spectator. It is pleasant to see how much the Creoles enjoy the very indifferent music which they like. The Clubs of Havana (for the English Club-house has wandered further than the Chinese herb, or the Arabian berry, and has undergone as many culinary modifications as as they,) partake of the character of Philharmonic Societies. It was very agreeable to see this innovation upon the bearish system of the club-house, and though the performances were ordinary enough, and the programmes such as are now served up only for the delectation of second-rate New England towns, the extravagant, and evidently sincere enjoyment of the audiences quite won my sympathies. The music sellers in the town, too, though their shelves would have driven a genuine Mendelssohnian of Boston quite wild with disgust, seemed to be doing a more extensive business than I should have fancied possible, in a community where aesthetic cultivation generally is at so low an ebb. German and classical Italian music are in very little demand, but Donizetti and Verdi must weep and howl by turns, through a third of the better houses of Havana. This is very well for a city where you cannot purchase a decent box of colors, or a tolerable drawing-book.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, AUG. 19, 1854.

### Italian Opera.

From present appearances, Opera,—by which of course is meant *Italian* Opera, either in the Italian or English language—is destined to have a pretty fair trial in our cities this next season. It will not be for any want of enterprize in this line, or of suitable buildings, that it will fail to succeed.

The importation of new troupes, with stars of every magnitude, and the completion of large and admirable new theatres in New York and Boston, and possibly in Philadelphia, combined with a remarkable uncertainty in regard to concert orchestra arrangements (due in some measure, some think, to the distracting influences or perturbations caused by the late presence of Jullien's ponderous body), seem to be directing the attention of the music loving public for the winter coming mainly to the for some time abandoned luxury of dramatic music. GRISI and MARIO are positively announced by Mr. Hackett, to appear in Castle Garden, on the fourth of September, in a series of operas and concerts. Who will occupy the grand new opera house, or "Academy of Music," in Fourteenth Street, does not yet appear; but there it is and there is a multitude of scattered stars, from the late SONTAG troupe, the STEFFANONE troupes and others, already in the country, with the probability of new arrivals. Niblo, it is said, has engaged an English troupe; and CLARA NOVELLO, the chief of English Sopranos, has been engaged for this country by Mr. Ullman, late agent of Mme. Sontag. Maretzek's entirely new Italian company have drawn but poorly so far at Castle Garden; but this is partly the accident of the season, since there is a charm in novelty itself and in the chance of discovering merit where no rumor has preceded, and since in the opinion of the best New York critics there are singers of rare excellence in Maretzek's unlabelled importation.

Here, too, in Boston, we are surprised by the announcement, for the very next week, of Italian Opera in the old worn out shell of the Howard Athenæum,—the old cradle, however, of all the operatic enthusiasm that has ever glowed in Boston, if we except the English opera, by the Woods and others in the old Tremont theatre, on whose ruins stands our present Tremont Temple. The announcement is mysterious and obscure; no names are mentioned; only the opening piece, *Ernani*; an unknown troupe, of whom composed or how they came to be here, no one seems informed; and with what hope of paying audience in these dog-day times seems yet more dubious. Yet let us indulge the conjecture that even in a little, obscure, superseded place, and with performers not enough known to fame to come heralded in the usual big letter cards and posters, there may possibly be something of that genuine vitality of Art, a single tone and throb of which can transfigure the merest old barn of a theatre till it shall seem a glorious La Scala. If haply so, then it will be like the peculiar charm of finding new ravines and waterfalls amongst those glorious mountains from which we have just reluctantly come back, compared with the traveller's wont of verifying the traditions of the Notch, the Flume, the Old Man of the Mountain, and so forth.

In connection with the great expensiveness of Opera, with the universal testimony of European managers that even in the great cities there it never pays its way except by subsidies from government, and with the doubtful problem of its permanent success in our country under any circumstances (although we have great faith in the system of large houses and of democratic prices), there has been renewed questioning, of late, of the real moral tendency and social gain of the Italian Opera. Has it in the long run benefited mankind to justify the energies that have been ex-

pended on it, or are now put forth to place it on some permanent footing in our young republic?

This question, in an able article in the New York *Musical Review*, has been boldly answered in the negative. It is but justice to the writer, to be sure, to state that he condemns not indiscriminately, that he limits his accusations to Italian opera, and to Italian opera as it has been, without prejudging what it might be; that he recognizes the natural proclivity of the cultivated man to the excitement of the lyric art, and that he predicts a wholesome solution of the musico-dramatic, or operatic problem, under the new social conditions and more wide-spread intellectual and moral culture of this country. There is no doubt that the Italian opera, for those actually engaged in it, is fraught with dangerous temptations, and has not been the best school of morality and true self-respect. Yet we doubt not that this evil has been much exaggerated. Still less doubtful is it that the peculiar charm of the Italian opera with the majority of indolent, luxurious, superficial listeners, readily becomes a sort of lotus-eating, feeble dissipation. Music, like any other good thing, not excepting even religious excitement, may be abused. Conscience and honor, even, have their morbid phenomena, with which we are but too familiar. And Music is equally a something about which one may be divinely in earnest, or passively and sensually self-indulgent; it has attractions for the deep and earnest character, and for the trivial and thoughtless. The tone and spirit of the man who heartily, profoundly relishes a Beethoven's symphony or a Mozart's *Requiem*, must be very different from that of him who finds supreme contentment in the brilliant repetitions of a Jullien's "Prima Donna Waltz," or in the honeyed common-places of the favorite Italian cavatinas, written to show off the *prima donna* or *tenore*. We own therefore, yet not without reservations, to considerable truth in the following:

Now, why is this? Is music demoralizing? Can it be that this art contains within its bosom the seeds of moral death to its votaries? Such an idea will doubtless fill the minds of many who have set up music as a divinity to be worshipped, with uneasiness and alarm. It has been reiterated over and over again that music is not pure to the pure only, but that it is pure to all; that unless music be wedded to words, it can neither wound nor defile, nor in any manner exert a deleterious influence; that music can only be used as an instrument of good; that it is the divine art; that it is religion. And herein, we think, lies the germ of the evil at which we have glanced. Music has been panegyricized and deified and worshiped as something so sublime and holy as to render any recognition of its Creator in its performance entirely unnecessary. It has by many been exalted above Him and set in His place; and its performance has consequently too often degenerated into a pagan rite. The result of such a state of things could not be otherwise than baneful, and the present state of the Italian opera is one of its legitimate fruits.

The fact is (it seems to us) music, in itself considered, cannot affect, except indirectly, any of our higher faculties. It appeals to the feeling, and if the emotions it stirs up be controlled and guided by reason and conscience, the effect will be in the highest degree beneficial; otherwise, the effect will be bad. Music takes a man's passions as it finds them, and whatever they may be, it intensifies and energizes them: if they be inclined to go astray, music speeds them on their course; if, on the contrary, they have a spiritual and upward tendency, music furnishes them with wings wherewith to fly to heaven. And further, music is one of the most intangible and subtle of things,

and if it be unduly cultivated, it fills the mind with vagueness and dreaminess, exerts upon it a dissipating and intoxicating effect nearly akin to that of alcohol, and begets a state of lassitude and enervation not at all favorable to the growth of the sterner virtues. Music, in short, is a powerful instrument for good or evil, and this renders it necessary that in its pursuit and enjoyment we should not give way to a transcendental deification of it, but always preserve our common-sense intact, and ever keep our passionate emotions subordinate to religious principles. It should be distinctly understood that the evil effects which result from an improper practice of music can not be charged upon the art itself, but upon the pernicious course of those of its followers who pursue it merely for the sensuous or physical gratification which it confers.

Now there is truth in this; but it is not all true. It is too true that Music does not necessarily operate to make men purer; neither do church-going, prayers and fastings; neither do any of what we all regard the purest agencies; the plentifullest rains may run off from the parched moral soil without reaching the roots of the young plants, or may quicken the weeds along with the corn. There is truth, too, in what is said of the vague and dreamy tendency. But all that about "worshipping" Music, about putting it in the place of the Creator, and making "a Pagan rite" of it, we must say, seems to us a vague and dreamy apprehension, a bugbear of the writer's own imagination. The discussion, however, requires more room than we have now for it. We shall return to it again.

#### Verdi's Compositions.

Considering the popularity of Verdi's operas—short-lived though it may prove—the accounts that have come to us of his life and works are singularly meagre. The brief sketch transferred to these columns some time since from the *Illustrated London News*, was far from satisfactory, and yet the most complete that could be found. A recent number of the journal *Il Pirata*, of Turin, gives the names of all the works composed by Verdi to the present time. These comprise, in the first place, nineteen operas, of which we here condense the list, with the dates, names of singers, and the theatres at which they were first produced:

1. *Oberto di San Bonifacio*, 2 acts: Mdmes. Marini and Shaw, Signori Salvi and Marini.—1839, at the Scala, Milan.
2. *Un Giorno di Regno*, in 2 acts: Mdmes. Marini and Abbada, Signori Ferlotti, Scalesi.—1840, at the Scala, Milan.
3. *Nabucco*, 4 acts: Mdmes. Strepponi, Bellinzaghi, Signori Miraglia, Ronconi, Derivis.—1842, Scala, Milan.
4. *I Lombardi*, 4 acts: Mme. Frezzolini, Signori Guasco, Severi, Derivis.—1843, Milan.
5. *Ernani*, 4 acts: Mme. Löwe, Sig. Guasco, Superchi, Selvi.—1844, Scala, Milan.
6. *I due Foscari*, 3 acts: Mme. Barbieri-Nini, Sig. Roppa, De Bassini.—1844, Argentina, Rome.
7. *Giovanna d'Arco*, 4 acts: Mme. Frezzolini, Sig. Poggi and Colini.—1845, Scala, Milan.
8. *Alzira*, 3 acts: Mme. Tadolini, Sig. Franchini, Coletti.—1845, San Carlo, Naples.
9. *Attila*: Mme. Löwe, Sig. Guasco, Constantini, Marini.—1846, Fenice, Venice.
10. *Macbeth*, 4 acts: Mme. Barbieri-Nini, Sig. Brunacci, Varesi, Felice Benedetti.—1847, at the Pergola, Florence.
11. *I Masnadieri*, 4 acts: Mlle. Jenny Lind,



Sig. Gardoni, Coletti, Lablache, Bouché.—Her Majesty's Theatre, London.

12. *Jerusalem*, 4 acts: Mme. Julian-Vangelder, MM. Duprez, Alizard, Prévot.—Grand Opera, Paris, 1847.

13. *La Battaglia di Legnano*: Mme. de Giuli, Sig. Fraschini, Colini.—1849, Argentina, Rome.

14. *Il Corsaro*, 3 acts: Mme. Barbieri-Nini, Sig. Fraschini, De Bassini.—At Trieste, in 1849.

15. *Luisa Miller*, 3 acts: Mmes. Gazzaniga, Salandri, Sig. Malvezzi, De Bassini, Arati, Selva. 1849, San Carlo, Naples.

16. *Stiffelio*, 3 acts: Mme. Gazzaniga, Sig. Fraschini and Colini.—1850, at Trieste.

17. *Rigoletto*, 3 acts: Mmes. Brambilla, Casolani, Sig. Mirate, Varesi, Pons.—1851, at Venice.

18. *Il Trovatore*, 4 acts: Mmes. Penco, Goggi, Sig. Baucardé, Guicciardi, Balderi.—1853, Rome.

19. *La Traviata*, 3 acts: Mme. Salvini, Sig. Graziani, Varesi.—1853, Fenice, at Venice.

Verdi has also written a great many *morceaux de salon*, among others six romances: *More, Elisa, Non l'accostare all'urna, L'Esule*, (for bass), *Il Poveretto*, (for baritone); *La Seduzione*, a norturno for three voices; and an Album of six melodies, entitled *Pensées Melodiques*, to wit: *Ad una Stella, Il Tramonto, La Zingara, Il Mistero, Lo Spazzo camino, Brindisi*.

His unpublished works also are numerous. From the age of thirteen to eighteen, when he went to Milan to study counterpoint, he composed military music; symphonies for orchestra, which were performed in churches, theatres, and philharmonic societies: five or six concertos for the piano, which he played himself at the Philharmonic Society; several serenades, cantatas, airs, duos, trios, and pieces of religious music, including a *Stabat Mater*. During the three years which he passed at Milan, he wrote little; his time was taken up with the study of composition. All that is known of his writing during that time is: two symphonies, which were executed at Milan in a private house; a cantata, sung at Count René Borromeo's, and various pieces, mostly of the *buffo* order, which his professor made him write for practice, and which were never instrumented.

Returning to Busseto, his birth-place, he again wrote marches, symphonies, pieces of vocal music, a mass, some complete vesper services, three or four *Tantum ergos* and other religious compositions. Among the vocal pieces may be mentioned the choruses from a tragedy of Manzoni, for three voices, and *Le Cinq Mai*, for single voice. All this is lost, with the exception of several symphonies which are still played at Busseto, and some compositions upon poems of Manzoni, which the author has preserved. (As to the "symphonies," in which many of the present Italian composers seem to be quite prolific, treating that sort of composition as child's play, the reader will of course not understand works to be weighed in the scales of Beethoven, Mozart and Mendelssohn.)

Giuseppe Verdi was born at Busseto on the 9th of October, 1814; accordingly he is now thirty-nine years old.

For some months past Verdi has been in Paris, where he is writing for the French Opera a work in five acts, on a poem of Scribe, which will be brought out in the course of the winter of 1854—1855. The emperor Napoleon III. has seen fit to borrow a little lustre from the author of *Er-*

*nani, Macbetta, Rigoletto*, and so many operas that have made the fortunes of Italian theatres, by conferring upon him the decoration of the Legion of Honor.

OPENING OF THE GRAND ORGAN.—This really superb *chef-d'œuvre* of the Messrs. E. & G. H. Hook, was formally opened in the Tremont Temple, Thursday evening, in the presence of a most crowded audience, and by the hands of many of the best organists in this country, who displayed all its power and qualities, in all varieties of stops and combinations, and in all styles of music, contrapuntal and melodic, church-like, orchestral, and operatic. We have no room now for any full description of the noble instrument or of the concert. That we leave to next week, merely stating for the present that in all the qualities that go to make up a Grand Organ, we have never listened to its equal. On all hands it was pronounced a triumph. We noticed not one trace of harshness throughout all its registers. In power; in equality; in the just balance of the great pyramid of harmony where all the stops are out, so that no voices scream too overpoweringly upon the top of others; in the exceeding sweetness of the solo stops; the superb reed pedal; and the general brilliancy, without sacrifice of sweetness, of the whole, it fully realized all that it claimed in the following description, printed on our cards of invitation.

This instrument, which is by far the largest and the most comprehensive in this country, consists of four complete Manuals, from CC to A in alt, 58 notes, the Swell throughout, and an independent Pedal Organ from CCC to D, 27 notes. Wind is supplied by three bellows, at different pressures. It contains seventy registers, comprising every variety of tone, and embracing all the novelties of the most celebrated European Organs.

It occupies a space at the end of the hall, 50 feet high, and 50 feet wide, and is concealed by an open-work screen. The following are the stops in this instrument:

GREAT ORGAN.		PEDAL ORGAN.	
1 Tenoroon Open Diapason.	12 Trumpet Treble.	1 Double Bourdon.	32 ft.
2 Grand Open Diapason.	13 Hautboy.	2 Bourdon.	16 ft.
3 Open Diapason.	14 Clarion.	3 Open Diapason, wood.	16 ft.
4 Melodia.	15 Double Trumpet.	4 Open Diapason, metal.	16 ft.
5 Stop'd Diapason.		5 Open Diapason.	8 ft.
6 Principal.		6 Violoncello.	8 ft.
7 Grand Principal.		7 Quint.	6 ft.
8 Twelfth.		8 Principal.	4 ft.
9 Fifteenth.		9 Trombone.	8 ft.
10 Grand Fifteenth.		10 Posaune.	16 ft.
11 Sesquialtera, 3 ranks.			
12 Mixture, 3 " "			
13 Furniture, 4 " "			
14 Trumpet.			
15 Clarion.			

CHOIR ORGAN.		SOLO ORGAN.	
1 Open Diapason.	1 Horn Diapason.	1 Horn Diapason.	
2 Dulciana.	2 Gamba.	2 Gamba.	
3 Stop'd Diapason.	3 Clarabella.	3 Clarabella.	
4 Principal.	4 Wald Flute.	4 Wald Flute.	
5 Fifteenth.	5 Picolo.	5 Picolo.	
6 Mixture, 3 ranks.	6 Trumpet.	6 Trumpet.	
7 Hohl Flute.			
8 Viol d'Amour.			
9 Clarinet.			
10 Bassoon.			

SWELL ORGAN.		COUPLERS, &c.	
1 Sub-Bass.	1 Swell to Great, Union.	1 Swell to Great, Union.	
2 Double Diapason.	2 Swell to Great, Super Sves.	2 Swell to Great, Super Sves.	
3 Open Diapason.	3 Choir to Great, Sub Sves.	3 Choir to Great, Sub Sves.	
4 Viol di Gamba.	4 Swell to Choir, Union.	4 Swell to Choir, Union.	
5 Stop'd Diapason.	5 Swell to Solo.	5 Swell to Solo.	
6 Principal.	6 Solo to Great.	6 Solo to Great.	
7 Night Horn.	7 Swell to Pedals.	7 Swell to Pedals.	
8 Twelfth.	8 Great to Pedals.	8 Great to Pedals.	
9 Fifteenth.	9 Choir to Pedals.	9 Choir to Pedals.	
10 Sesquialtera, 3 ranks.	10 Pedal Octaves.	10 Pedal Octaves.	
11 Trumpet Bass.	11 Pedal Bourdon Separation.	11 Pedal Bourdon Separation.	
	12 Pedal Open Diapason.	12 Pedal Open Diapason.	
	13 Solo Organ Signal.	13 Solo Organ Signal.	
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